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S E C R E T MUSCAT 000330

SIPDIS

STATE FOR T, NP/RA, PM, NEA/RA, NEA/ARPI
SECDEF FOR OUSD(P)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/28/2015

TAGS: PARM PREL KNNP EWWT MASS MU

SUBJECT: PSI: FM CLARIFIES OMAN'S VIEWS

REF: MUSCAT 279 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Richard L. Baltimore III.
Reason: 1.4 (b, d).

¶11. (S) In a February 27 telcon on various subjects, the Ambassador sought clarification from Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yusuf bin Alawi on the Omani government's attitude toward the Proliferation Security Initiative following its communication of February 9 (reftels).

¶12. (S) The Minister reassured the Ambassador that Oman "agrees 100 percent" with the principles and voluntary arrangements embodied in PSI. The Ministry's note verbale of February 9, he explained, was not a change of heart. It merely reflected the fact that there was no formal PSI agreement to be signed or convention to be ratified. Bin Alawi reiterated the government's united position on the need to combat proliferation, saying that in the event that the USG were to inform Muscat of a suspicious vessel near Oman's waters, the Sultanate would "cooperate in full" to inspection it.

Comment

¶13. (S) The Minister's explanation of Oman's PSI stance tracks much more closely with its actions on the ground than did the February 9 note verbale. In addition to the Minister's prompt reassurances, we further note that a PSI-related air interdiction exercise (a first for the region) successfully took place within the framework of a broader Omani-Coalition air exercise in Thumrait on February 23.

BALTIMORE